United Nations A/57/4

General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 October 2002

Original: English

Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 76
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

On 27 June 2002, the Secretary-General sent note verbales to Israel and all other Member States, drawing their attention to the relevant provisions of resolutions 56/52 to 56/58, including paragraph 5 of resolution 55/57, and requesting information by 16 August 2002 concerning any action taken or envisaged in relation to their implementation. A reply dated 15 August 2002 was received from Israel, covering various aspects of resolutions 56/52 to 56/58. The full text of the reply is reproduced in the report. No replies have been received from other Member States regarding paragraph 5 of resolution 56/57.

* This report is being submitted on 8 October 2002 so as to include the most up-to-date information possible.

02-62479 (E) 211002

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/57 of 10 December 2001 on Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues.

2. On 27 June 2002, the Secretary-General drew the attention of the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations to resolutions 56/52 to 56/58 of 10 December 2001, with the request that the Permanent Representative of Israel inform him by 16 August 2001 of any steps his Government had taken or envisaged taking in implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolutions.

3. On 27 June 2002, the Secretary-General sent a note verbale to all other Member States, drawing their attention to the relevant provisions of resolutions 56/52 to 56/58, including paragraph 5 of resolution 55/57, and requesting information by 16 August 2002 concerning any action taken or envisaged in relation to their implementation.

4. A reply dated 15 August 2002 was received from Israel, covering various aspects of resolutions 56/52 to 56/58. The text reads as follows:

> "Israel's position on these resolutions has been set forth in successive annual replies submitted to the Secretary-General in recent years, the latest of which being Israel's Note Verbale of 30 July 2001. Israel regrets the fact that the resolutions regarding the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) remain rife with political issues irrelevant to the work for which UNRWA is responsible and thus remain detached from the reality in the area. Accordingly, Israel abstained on resolution 56/55 and voted against resolutions 56/52, 56/54, 56/56, 56/57 and 56/58.
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> "While Israel continues to support UNRWA's humanitarian mission, it remains concerned regarding a number of issues related to UNRWA's conduct. On several occasions, UNRWA has issued one-sided statements devoid of any recognition of the security context in which Israel operates or of Israel's legitimate right to take measures in defense of its citizens. Israel does not consider such statements helpful or conducive to a productive working relationship with UNRWA.
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> "UNRWA has also remained silent while an extensive infrastructure of Palestinian terrorism has taken root in Palestinian refugee camps. These terrorist activities are not only clear violations of Security Council resolutions, which require that the civilian character of refugee camps be maintained, but also directly endanger the lives of civilians residing nearby. While Israel recognizes that UNRWA does not have a mandate to enforce security and public order in the refugee camps, it does believe that UNRWA is in a position to draw attention to the misuse of refugee camps by armed elements in the interests of the safety and security of the civilian population, in line with Security Council resolutions adopted on this subject.
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> "Finally, UNRWA also must take care to ensure that its facilities, as well as the textbooks and other educational materials in use in its schools, do not glorify terrorism, incite young children to acts of violence or propagate anti-Semitic ideas and images.
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> "Israel continues to believe that UNRWA can play an important role in promoting the social and economic advancement foreseen in the agreements between Israel and the Palestinians, within the limits of its humanitarian

mandate, and accordingly looks forward to continuing its cooperation and good working relationship with UNRWA.

"Israel urges the Secretary-General and UNRWA to consider, together with the parties concerned, ways in which the organization can enhance the fulfilment of its mandate in an accountable and responsible manner in the best interests of those whom UNRWA has been charged to serve."

5. No replies have been received from other Member States with regard to paragraph 5 of resolution 56/57.